Impact of liberalisation on the exports/ imports

1806. PROF. NAUNIHAL SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government's liberalisation moves on the export-import front seem to have failed to drive on market forces in favour of country's external resources position;

(b) if so, the reasons for this situation;

(c) whether it is a fact that trade deficit doubled in 1995-96 as compared with 1994-95; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor and the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BALLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) and (b) No Sir. The Export-Import Policy 1992—97, has in fact, provided a conducive atmosphere for export growth which is borne out by the fact that exports have grown in $ terms by 20%, 18% and 21% respectively over the past three years. The foreign currency reserves which at one point in 1991 stood at US $ 1 Billion increased to US $ 17.7 Billion in July, 1996.

(c) and (d) The Trade deficit which during 1994-95 was US $ 2027 million, stood at US $ 4538 million in 1995-96. The higher deficit during 1995-96 as compared to 1994-95 was on account of higher growth rate of imports which in 1995-96 increased at the rate of 36.5% as compared to 28.2% growth in the proceeding year. Higher imports of petroleum based products, essential items of mass consumption, machineries and equipments led to the growth in imports leading to a higher trade deficit during 1995-96. The import of raw materials, intermediates, machineries and equipments helped to increase India's competitiveness which is reflected in significantly increased growth the exports as also of manufacturing at double digit rates.

Supply of Iron Ore to Private Steel Producers by NMDC

1807. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that National Mineral Development Corporation has been supplying iron ore to private steel producers besides meeting export obligations ignoring the requirement of steel plants in the public sector like Visakhapatnam Steel Plant; if so, the limitations and reationale of the situation; and

(b) the present level of iron ore being produced by NMDC?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL & MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) NMDC produced 143 lakh tonnes of iron ore in 1995-96.

Demand for inclusion of Sagaras of Visakhapatnam district in the list of Scheduled Tribes

1808. SHRIMATI JAYAPRADA MAHANTA: DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD:

Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Sagaras of Visakhapatnam district have demanded their inclusion in the list of Scheduled Tribes; and

(b) if so, the action taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA): (a) Representation have been received for the inclusion of Uppara (Sagara) community in the list of Scheduled Tribes of Andhra Pradesh.

(b) These representations' are being considered in consultation *inter-alia,* with the Government of Andhra Pradesh.